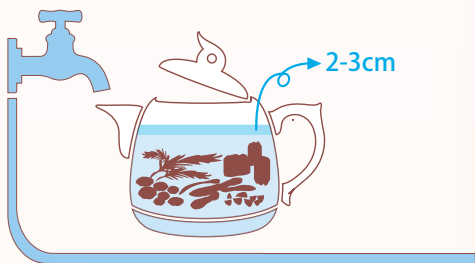


3. Third, add water until it is about 2 - 3 cm above the medicines.



4. Fourth, bring the water to boiling point with strong heat, then shift to gentle heat and simmer for another 30 - 45 minutes. Stir the medicine 2 - 3 times during decocting.



5. Fifth, strain the decoction when it is ready.



Tips on preparing herbal decoctions

One should follow the instructions of Chinese medicine practitioner in preparing some Chinese herbal medicines that require special decocting time and method.

Generally, a dose of Chinese herbal medicines can be decocted once or twice. For the second decoction, less water should be added for cooking as the medicines need not be soaked again.

Be careful not to overcook the Chinese herbal medicines. Overcooking will affect the active ingredients and hence the effectiveness of the Chinese medicines. Overcooked decoction is not suitable for consumption.

Burnt Chinese herbal medicines should not be decocted again since the quality had been affected.

The above tips are the general procedures of preparing herbal decoctions. Proper decoction methods should be based on the properties of the Chinese medicines and the patient's clinical condition. The instructions of the Chinese medicine practitioners should be followed before preparing herbal decoctions.

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Chinese Medicine Division
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Preparing Herbal Decoctions

Decoction is the most common dose form in Chinese medicine. Since the containers and methods used in preparing the decoction will have a direct effect on the quality of medicine, attention to every step in the preparation of herbal decoction is essential.



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Containers for preparing herbal decoction

Ceramic containers are preferable in preparing herbal decoction. Decoction of good quality can be produced with ceramic containers because they are chemically stable in which heat can be transmitted evenly and well preserved. Metal containers are not suitable for preparing herbal decoction.



- ✓ Ceramic containers
(e.g. clay pot, ceramic pot, earthen pot)
- ✗ Metal containers
(e.g. iron pot, titanium pot, copper pot)

Cleaning of pot

The pot for preparing herbal decoction should be washed thoroughly after each use. This is to prevent the residue from interfering with Chinese herbal medicines to be decocted next.



Preparation procedures



1. First, rinse the Chinese herbal medicines under running water to remove dirt and to keep the Chinese herbal medicines clean.



2. Second, thoroughly soak the Chinese herbal medicines in clean water.

